transfer by air conditioned vehicles, sightseeing, Darshan, visit to holy places, etc. is scheduled to run as Maha Parinirvan Special w.e.f. 28.03.2007 covering Lumbini, Sarnath, Bodhgaya, Kushinagar, Nalanda, Sravasti and also Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikh in Agra. Indian Railway Tourism and Catering Corporation (IRCTC) has planned to run 11 trips during 2007 and other 6 trips in 2008 upto March (depending on its reception) with each trip having a duration of 8 days. The option of undertaking partial journey for a minimum duration of 3 nights is also available to the passengers.

(c) For its successful run IRCTC has made all out efforts for marketing, wide publicity and enquiry redressal system.

Introduction of new goods trains

†1310. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new goods trains introduced by the Railways during the last three years and at what levels these were introduced and the quantum of goods in meteric tonns, transported by the railway during these years and the funds earned by the Railways;

(b) whether Government are also paying attention towards protection of the goods trains, if so, the criteria therefor; and

(c) whether the concerned officers have been consulted with regard to the protection of the goods trains and whether attention was paid to its technical aspects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Goods trains are not operated on a prescribed time table like passenger trains. Goods trains are loaded as per demands placed by Railway users. The total freight loading and earnings thereof for the last three years are as follows:

year	No. of wagons loaded per day (Broad Gauge)	Loading in tonnes	million	Freight earnings in crores
2003-04	65490	557.39		27646.15
2004-05	70615	602.78		30844.13
2005-06	75552	667.39		35971.17

†Originai notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Goods trains are run as per the operational and safety rules mentioned in various codes on Indian Railways.

(c) Does not arise.

Increasing reservation period

1311. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has decided to increase the advanced reservation period from 60 to 90 days;

(b) whether any order to this effect has been issued; *

(c) whether exception would be made with respect to certain trains; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) There will be no change in the case of certain day time express trains like Taj Express, Gomti Express etc. where lower time limits for advance reservations are at present in force.

Gauge conversion of Chhindwara-Jabalpur Line

†1312. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether provision for gauge conversion of narrow gauge between Chhindwara-Seoni-Jabalpur is being made during ensuing financial year;

(b) if so, by when the gauge conversion on this route is proposed to be undertaken in the action plan for expansion/gauge conversion of the Railways; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the details thereof?

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†Onginal notice of the question was received in Hindi